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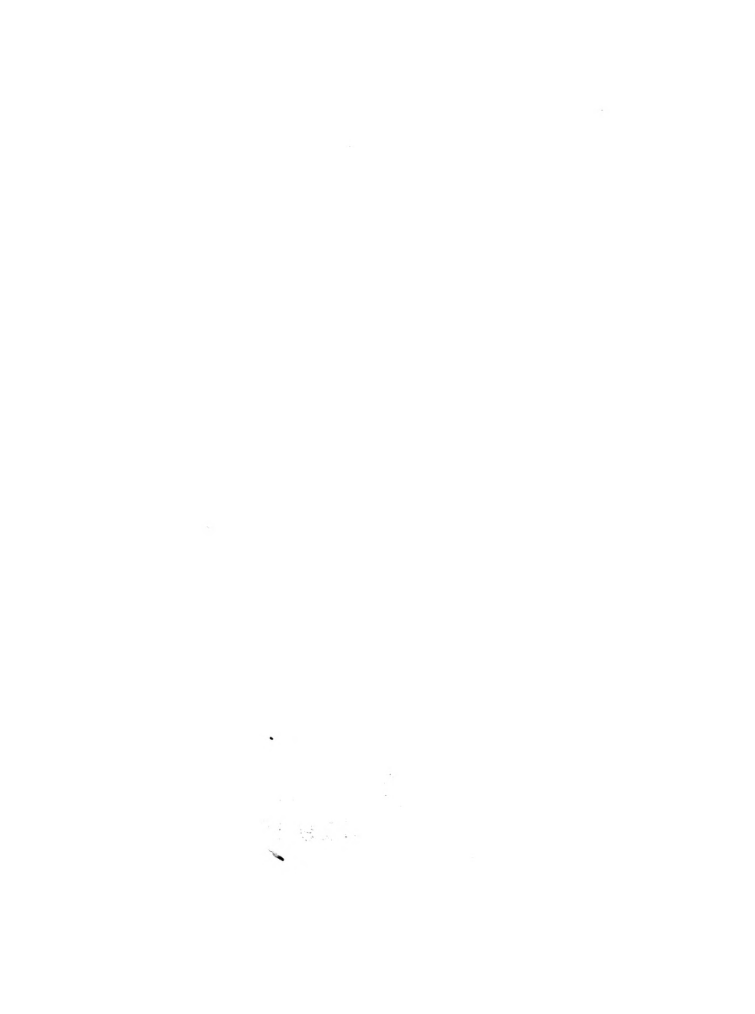
1895

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From
Our
Masonic
Garden.



...A...

✿ LITTLE BOQUET ✿

FROM

Our Masonic Garden.



BY

JOHN S. ELLIS.

*Author of "Answer to Prayer,"
"A Good or a Bright Mason," and other
unwritten Masonic Poems.*



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BY

JOHN S. ELLIS



Friendship.



Somewhere in the Garden of Eden there grew,
Where its tendrils were watered with Heavenly dew,
A little green vine, of species so rare
That Adam and Eve knew not it was there
Until the bold serpent had taught them the way
To discover such things when he led them astray.

When the old couple first discovered the vine,
And found that its fragrance was something divine,
They trained it to grow at the side of their hearth,
From thence it has spread to the ends of the earth :
In hot sandy desert, on mountains of snow,
Wherever man plants it, 'twill flourish and grow.

There is naught in the world so mild, yet so strong,
There is nothing so deep, so broad nor so long ;
It holds in its tendrils superlative power,
Yet bears on its branches a sweet little flower.
The threatenings of death it has often defied,
And for it a Savior has suffered and died.

It binds up the wounds of the sick and the sad ;
It helps to reform the vicious and bad ;
It grows through the grates of the strong prison door,
Unbinding the victim that's chained to the floor.
The seed is direct from God's garden above,
This vine is true friendship ; its blossom pure love.

We Meet Upon The Level.



To meet upon the level
Is an easy thing to say,
But when it comes to practice,
Do we do it every day?

Do we meet him on the level
If the brother chance to be
Just a little out at elbow,
Or baggy at the knee?

When we meet him in his work shop
Do we greet him with the grip
That we do the noted statesman
On our European trip?

Do we meet him on the level then
And give him just the chance
That we do the dashing fellow
With the creases in his pants?

If fortune does not smile on him
In sunshine and repose,
Do we meet him on the level
In his second-handed clothes?

Do we invite him to our church,
And seat him in our pew,
And warm our hearts by clasping hands
As brothers ought to do?

Yes, we meet him on the level,
On the broad Masonic plan.
Whenever we know him to be
A Mason and a Man.

“ We’ll meet him on the level,”
“ And part upon the square,”
And then perhaps he’ll vouch for us
When we meet him——over there.



Survival of the Fittest.



" Many men of many minds,"
How often you have read those lines,
And copied them, over and over again,
Concerning birds, and fishes, and men.

They carry us back to olden days :
The log school house, old fashioned plays,
Of base, and shinny, and others like these,
Bright moonlight nights, and spelling-bees.

But many years have slipped away,
And many changes come to stay :
Many of our dearest friends are gone,
Since you was " Jim " and I was " John."

We've proven the truth of these old lines,
There are " many men of many minds,"
Both you and I have lived to see
So " many men that can't agree."

But here, an alter we have found,
Where one and all may gather 'round :
Where strife ne'er enters, save to see
" Who best can work, and best agree."

Our land-marks stand, eternal wall,
Though kingdoms rise, and kingdoms fall;
Though nations come, and nations go,
No changes doth our Order know.

Adown the ages plainly seen,
Come marching, from old Palestine,
Their lines unbroken, well defined,
Great multitudes of single mind.

And do you ask "from whence they sprang ?"
From where the Morning stars first sang ;
Where Israel's hosts first dealt the blow
That felled the walls of Jerico.

From where the Ark first found a rest,
On Ar-a-rat's bold towering crest,
From Arctic clime, from Torrid zone,
From toiler's cot, from gilded throne.

From snowy Alp, from burning sand,
From every nation, every land,
Whate'er their name or station be,
All gather 'round this family tree.

One mind, one aim, one language rare,
Free-Masons sprang from everywhere
That wisdom ruled or genius wrought,
Survival of the fittest—thought.

“Mary and John.”



John Jones was courting Miss Mary Ann Brown,
And the first thing they knew it was all over town
That John was a Mason, and Mary declared
She'd marry no man whose secrets were shared
With a great lot of men and kept from his wife;
So she'd not marry him, you could just bet your life.

“To think of my husband knowing things he won't tell
To his own lawful wife, I'll just wait a spell;
If he don't come around and squarely agree,
As soon as he learns them to tell them to me,
I'll give him the mitten, that's just what I'll do,
Then he can go marry that big Sally Drew.”

John hearing of this at once made a call,
And promised Mary Ann that he would tell all
The secrets of Masons that he ever knew,
Vowing never to speak to big Sally Drew.
He was perfectly safe in all that he said,
He had only petitioned and the Drew girl was dead.

Then seating himself in an old-fashioned chair,
He said, “Mary Ann, I vow and declare
To tell all I know of this monstrous affair,
If you'll keep the secret.” “I'll do it, so there.”

Then John commenced slowly—scratching his head,
He had to make up every word that he said:
“The first time I went to that miserable place,
I was met at the door and stared in the face
By a ghost, or a goblin, of monstrous size:
He’d a nose a foot long, and great goggle eyes.

“He caught me by the hair, and in thunderous tones
He yelled in my ear ‘We’ve got you, John Jones,
So come right along and rattle the bones.’

“Then dragging me into a long, dark hall,
Where skeletons were hanging around on the wall,
They made me shake every skeleton’s hand,
Just to get the grip of their ghostly band.

“Then being divested of all my clothes,
From the crown of my head to the ends of my toes,
I was led into a dark and dismal room,
Where tar would look white, compared with the gloom,
And I heard the voice of the big goblin say,
‘Strike a light, John Jones, and make your own way.’

“‘I can’t,’ said I, ‘you give me no chance.’
Then he scratched a match on the seat of my pants.”
“Hold on, John Jones, you’re a leetle too fast:
You think you are smart, but I’ve caught you at last.”
(Said Mary Ann Brown, with a kind of a leer:)
“Didn’t you just say you was naked, my dear?”

“ Oh yes, Mary Ann, but then, don’t you see,
He scratched the match where my pants ought to be ;
And he scratched so hard that he wounded the skin,
And that’s where their Free-Mason brand comes in.”

“ But as I was saying : procuring a light,
I looked round the room and oh ! what a sight !
There on a throne right opposite the door,
The boss goblin sat, and crouched on the floor
Were other hob-goblins and ghosts by the score.

“ They seemed to sit there in silent repose,
Until finally the old boss goblin arose
And said, ‘ Brother Jones, the sign we’ll disclose ;’
Then each goblin placed his thumb to his nose,
And wiggled his fingers, and wagged his toes.

“ Then right in front of their ghostly throne,
They made me kneel down on a red-hot stone,
And there remain until I would say
‘ These secrets I’ll keep, let come what may.

“ I further declare, and solemnly vow,
That when I get married, (if not married now,)
I’ll ever hold sacred the marriage vows ;
I’ll build the fires and milk the cows ;
And if ever I tell any person at all,
You may hang me out in——skeleton hall,
That all new members may rattle my bones ;—
Signed—‘ Obligation of Brother John Jones.’

“And now, Mary Ann, I trust you will see,
Just what the awful results would be
If the Mason’s found out that ‘I’ve gave them away,’
So let’s go right off and get married to-day.”

“John Jones,” said Mary, “I’ve listened to you,
And allow that—part of your story is true ;
But thinking it over, I’m inclined to say,
That goblin business, that’s all childish play,
But—some of the other—their marriage vows,
And building the fires—and milking the cows,
Of course that’s different, dear John,—and so
I guess we might as well call it a go.

“For to think of your bones hanging out in that hall
Why—John, I never could stand it—at—all
And if—they’d only scratched your hand
Instead of your—your —pants when they gave you the
brand!”

Now, my brethren, there’s a moral in this :
If you would insure connubial bliss,
Like Brother John Jones, always act by the—well
You can join what you please as long as you tell !



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